



Ottawa Police Services Board
Special Meeting

CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES 55 #1

THURSDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2022 3:00 P.M.

By Zoom

Present: Councillor E. El-Chantiry, B. Johnson, Councillor J. Leiper, D. Nirman, R. Swaita, S. Valiquet

Others: K. Ferraro, Executive Director; D. White, Legal Counsel; S. Bell, Interim Chief; B. Dunker, CAO; J. Steinbachs, Director of Communications; R. Guest, Mayor's Assistant; R. Drummond, Inspector; Hannah Logan, Board Assistant, G. Wight, Ministry of the Solicitor General; J. Sahota, Ministry of the Solicitor General; C. Huneault, Legal Counsel

CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

That the Ottawa Police Services Board confirm the Agenda for the 17 February 2022 In Camera meeting.

CONFIRMED

ITEMS OF BUSINESS

1. BRIEFING ON OPERATIONAL PLANNING SURROUNDING ONGOING DEMONSTRATIONS

The Service provided an overview of the current situation surrounding the unlawful demonstrations.

Three weeks prior, convoys began to arrive. Since then, Ottawa had faced turmoil, terror, and experienced a lack of confidence in the OPS. The demonstrations were unprecedented. With additional resources from their policing partners, the OPS had increased capacities which enabled them to form a clear plan. They had reached a point of being adequately resourced to execute their plan.

The OPS' integrated planning team included the best planners and most experienced members from OPS, OPP and RCMP. The group had canvassed their global connections to develop strategies and techniques, which led them to the plan they were prepared to move ahead with. The OPS had created a three-tiered command, with the top level being referred to as "Gold," and responsible for strategy. The gold level included I/Chief Bell, RCMP Deputy Commissioner Mike Duheme, and OPP Deputy Commissioner Chris Harkins. The "Silver" level constituted OPS Acting Deputy Chief Ferguson, RCMP Acting Director General Kelly Bradshaw, and RCMP Chief Superintendent Carson Pardy. They were tasked with the operational side. The "Bronze" level included OPS' Rob Bernier, an RCMP member and an OPP member, tasked with the tactical side.

The Service indicated that their operational plan included three phases. The first phase was referred to as stabilization. The stabilization phase included clear media messaging, an increased police presence, and a hardening of the red zone. The goal of the stabilization phase was to amass officers into the city and begin to control the demonstration area. Discussions with demonstrators on the ground were being escalated, and they were frequently being reminded that what they were doing was illegal. The turning point in the stabilization phase was what was then unfolding in the core; the Service was turning the demonstration area into a secured zone. The secured zone has been cordoned off and barricaded. It has over 100 checkpoints that had to be gone through to either enter or exit the zone. To enter the zone, individuals

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were required to provide lawful reasons such as attending work or their residence. Recently enacted legislation allowed the OPS to secure the zone. The Service indicated that they would continue to work and negotiate with demonstrators, and over the next 24-hours they intended to enter into the second phase of their operation.

The second phase was described as an increased presence around the secure zone's perimeter to maintain protestors while systematically dismantling the protests. The OPS would begin to remove all people and all vehicles. They planned to work across the footprint, beginning at one end of the perimeter and working across the zone, clearing individual sections and shrinking the footprint. Crowd management experts had identified the importance of taking back an area and returning it to the control of the residents rather than the demonstrators. Once an area had been cleared, the Service indicated that City of Ottawa supports would promptly move to clearing garbage and cleaning the area. That strategy would be carried through the entire zone.

The third and final phase of the operation was referred to as maintenance. The Service noted that this would involve an ongoing police presence in the area to ensure that demonstrators do not return. Reference was made to the Windsor demonstration site, at which they had retained approximately 300 officers on site despite the demonstration having been cleared for nearly a week.

Three key areas that were crucial in the development of the OPS' operational plan were: planning, communication, and legal.

The Service noted that an incredible capacity for planning had been brought into the OPS in conjunction with the RCMP and OPP. The Service indicated that they would continue to develop plans and would be prepared for every possible contingency.

In terms of communications, the Service noted that they were trying to disseminate as much information as possible, and they would be releasing an increased number of communications over their operational phase.

The legal challenges of relying on pieces of legislation never having been enacted required were highlighted. The Service noted that the support of various legal teams had been critical.

OPS legal counsel Christiane Huneault then offered to provide the Board with a copy of the operational plan, indicating that it would be highly confidential

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and strictly for informational purposes.

A question was raised regarding the size of the secure zone. The Service explained that it would span from Bronson Avenue to the Canal, and from the Queensway to Parliament Hill.

Concern was expressed that if demonstrators are not allowed into the secured zone, they could simply select an alternate location. The Service indicated that they continued to consult with their legal department on mitigating that potential issue. It was further noted that if someone expressed that they were attempting to enter the core to demonstrate, and then diverted their efforts to an alternate location, they could be arrested, however the Service would of course need to respond in order of priority.

A question was raised regarding what equipment might be used in phase 2 of the OPS' operation. The Service would not detail what would or would not be used, as they would follow their use of force model and would adhere to the levels of escalation outlined within it. Further, the Service indicated that a decision to use something like tear gas would be in the purview of the on-the-ground incident commander. The Service committed to providing timely public safety updates, however assured the Board that the most significant areas of the demonstration were primarily in non-residential zones. They had assigned a liaison staff sergeant to be in direct contact with councillors McKenney and Fleury.

A question was raised regarding OC Transpo. The Service indicated that they were liaising with OC Transpo and their security planned to closely monitor bus stations. They had plans to divert bus routes as they had been throughout the demonstrations, and if necessary, stations would be shut down.

The Service would not advise exactly how many officers had been received from the OPP and RCMP, however they indicated that all resources required had arrived on scene. Ms. Huneault explained that the operational plan that the Board would be provided with did not include specifics.

The anticipated operational window was 24 hours up to a maximum of 5 days. The Service noted that it was an incredibly intensive operation, and that it would be running for 24-hours daily.

The prime concern the Service had regarding their operation was the presence of children with the secured zone. They indicated having been working in conjunction with the Children's Aid Society to ensure their plans

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were crafted with the presence of children in mind.

The Service was carefully tracking incoming convoys and noted that they had followed one the night prior however had not had to divert any as of yet. It was believed that weather may have been a factor, as a winter storm was expected in Ottawa. Several hundred trucks had been diverted from Ottawa to Quebec the weekend of February 12.

In terms of intelligence information, the Service indicated that they would always welcome more, however there had been significant cooperation between the OPP, RCMP, and CSIS. The OPS had increased their ability to gather and dissect information and were confident in their planning.

With regards to Ottawa residents holding counter-protests, the Service had released messaging requesting that the community not participate. It was noted that counter protests would force the OPS to divert resources to ensure the safety of individuals participating.

The Service continued to ask demonstrators to leave, however not many individuals were choosing to depart. The OPS continued to hope that once all service members arrived at the demonstration site, they would begin to see a number of demonstrators depart. The Service clarified that even if people choose to leave, they could still be subjected to charges at a later date. Policing efforts were underway to interfere with the supplies being delivered to the demonstration grounds.

A point was raised regarding the extensive media coverage the OPS' operation would have, and it was believed that the community would see the positive action and as such not feel inclined to participate in counterprotests.

That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this item for information.

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2. LABOUR RELATIONS MATTER

** The minute for this item appears under Confidential Minute 49 #2 distributed to Board members only.*

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

MOTION TO MOVE OUT OF IN CAMERA SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.